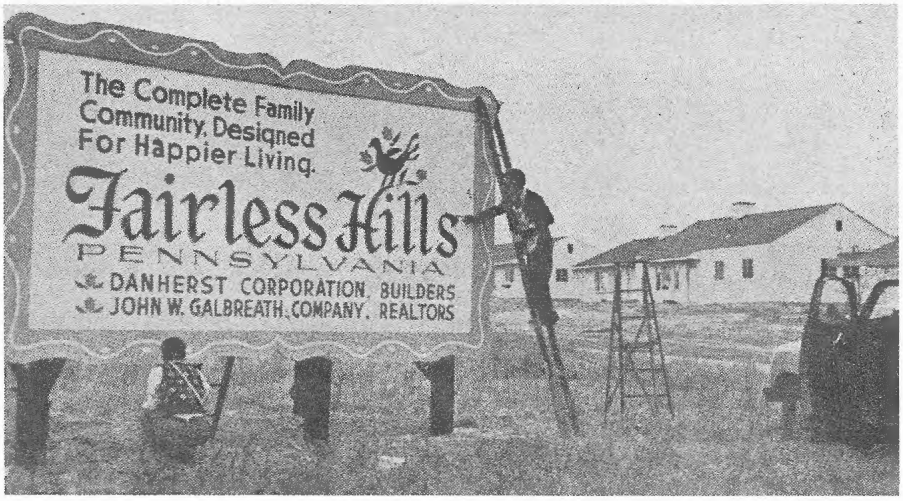
Falls Township

1692-1968

275th ANNIVERSARY



FAIRLESS HILLS

New Living Room For Industry.

New Communities, held to a size where a man could know his neighbors and wrapped in green space where his children could safely play had been a planner's dream for generations. During the 1930's a few visionary planners and real estate men laid out the first American shape of just such a community but the land hopefully earmarked for industrial location had never been used. In the green valley of the Delaware River, United States Steel's Fairless Works was the decisive new factor which the dream had always lacked before. The year was 1951.

Realtor John W. Galbreath of Columbus, Ohio chose a gently sloping tract of farmland as the site for Fairless Hills — named for United States Steel President Benjamin Fairless. The community, about 5 miles from Fairless Works, included approximately 1300 acres. Fairless Hills was built to house employees of the giant steel mill and future residents who would man the industry and service jobs which were soon to be created in this new industrial development.

On former meadows, Bucks County residents in the Fallsington area watched with awe as Galbreath's Danherst Corporation began to build a 5,000 home community in its back yard. Until the late 1940's, Fallsington drowsed happily under its tall trees at the intersection of

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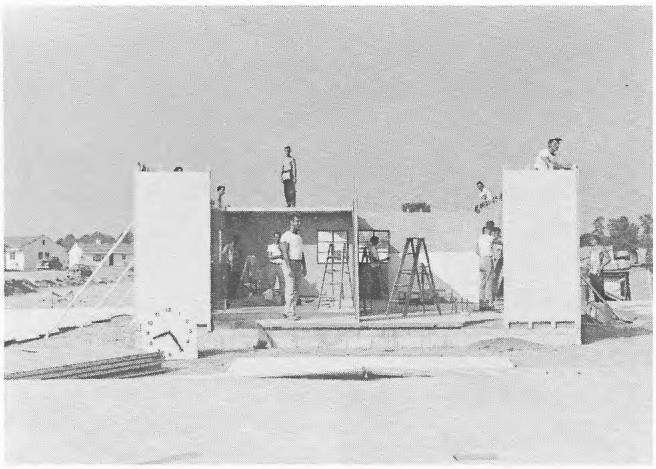
three Bucks County roads. Around it were pleasant and productive farmlands, sloping down to the Delaware, some four miles to the east. In it were about 3500 residents. The roads which met in Fallsington were quiet, secondary highways. The voice of the cities was far away.

The Danherst Corporation started construction April 14, 1951 and by the end of May the first street in Fairless Hills was laid out. The first ten houses had been erected on Andover Road beginning at the corner of Oxford Valley Road — new living room for industry.

The tempo increased until, by the end of August, 20 new homes were being completed each day. Every week saw an expansion which was about the size of Fallsington. In October 1951, the newest town in the United States had 1100 homes under roof and over 100 occupied. All of Fairless Hills went to a party that Halloween at Bucks County's Penn Manor Club. There were variety acts, dancing and prizes for the parents and children. Highlight of the evening was the presentation of a $100 Defense Savings Bond to Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Manns of 105 Bedford Road, parents of the first-born girl in Fairless Hills, Rose Marie Mann. The award was made by John W. Gaibreath. Claimant to an identical bond award was the first boy born in the new community, Dennis Keith Bartels, son of Mr. and Mrs. K. D. Bartels, 211 Coventry Road. Dennis was born November 1, 1951.

The month of December that year was highlighted by a truly Merry Christmas. Five hundred new residents gathered in Edgely Fire House as Danherst's guests for a dinner party. The children were invited to a party of their own at the Messer Farm House in the center of Fairless Hills. There they were entertained and enjoyed Christmas goodies. Registered nurses were on hand to care for the little ones until their parents drove through the blizzard that night to call for them. New neighbors became better acquainted as they enjoyed the evening of festivity and the Columbus Boy Choir of Princeton provided a program of carols. Albert J. Berdis, Superintendent of Fairless Works, John W. Galbreath and Senator John W. Bricker of Ohio were the main speakers of that evening. Senator Bricker reminded the guests

Building materials arriving with difficulty!



Three sides erected since 8:00 a.m.

Oxford Valley Road and Bedford Road, June 27, 1951. Gessner Homestead was site of Fairless Hills News and Public Relations Department of Danherst Corporation.

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Aerial view of Fairless Hills showing Lake Caroline, Oxford Valley School, William Penn Junior High School, Golf Course, Fire Company, shopping center, St. Francis Cabrini School.

that "The schools may educate, the churches may give spiritual strength, but the moral foundations of America are built in the home."

The building corporation officials were anxious to encourage in every possible way the development of an active community life — thus the appointment of Miss Frances Eastburn as community director. Through her efforts many groups were formed which brought increased pleasure and relaxation into the lives of Fairless Hills families. This also served to widen their circle of acquaintances, bring them new hobbies and eventually, for some, turned those hobbies into profitable sources of knowledge and skill. The immediate results of such sudden expansion mixed a number of civic headaches with sudden prosperity. Existing school systems, already strained, were more crowded. Danherst Corporation made available several houses for temporary use as schools. When a state meeting of school principals visited the site on Trenton Road they registered enthusiasm about the "home-like" feeling of these temporary elementary classrooms.

The Shaw House was remodeled to accommodate a Community Center on Oxford

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HOME TOWN

You can't build a home town.

The cleverest architects and the most determined builders in the world never designed or erected a home town.

And yet the world is full of them, revolves around them, would fall apart without them.

They are hard to find. They hide behind streets and buildings and trees and houses, until they look just like ordinary towns.

You could be looking right at a home town, and unless you belonged there or came from there, you'd never know it. That is, until you had learned some of the many, magical things that make up a home town.

Home towns are made up of bowling teams, borrowed cups of sugar, first names and easy hello's. They are noted for father and son banquets, tricycles in driveways, football heroes, village belles, neighborhood belles, belles of the block and many assorted sweethearts . . . all of the latter being the most beautiful in the world.

Home towns have plenty of nearby fields for Saturday Indian massacres, quantities of evening breeze to help the sounds of choir practice get around, and one of the world's best backyard wireless systems.

They're long on lodge meetings, school meetings, business meetings, town meetings, meetings in the drugstore, in the barbershop, or in somebody's kitchen after the show. All are characterized by a wealth of opinion, freely given, freely disputed, but never forbidden.

Home towns are heated in winter by steaming coffee pots, cooled in summer by small boys whizzing down the sidewalk after dark on bicycles. They are lit up by the sparkle of tinsel on Christmas baskets down at the firehouse. They are shaded by a wealth and profusion of family trees whose minutest branches are known to all.

Home towns are warm, wonderful places.

They're happiness, family-style. They're the star spangled excitement of a Fourth of July afternoon with its unashamed patriotism. They're George the butcher, Scout Troop Three, the price of potatoes, and the Galworthy girl getting married.

People living a life and dreaming a dream together.

And home towns are *hard to find . . . unless you know just where to look!*

In your heart.

Valley Road above the lake site. A large meeting hall on the first floor with office space for various groups and facilities for a teen-age canteen in the basement were provided. The "Fairless Hills News" was published semi-monthly as a service to the people of the community. The column "Meet Your Neighbors" regularly pictured new families and featured lengthy articles about their interests, hobbies, children and their former homes. Early Fairless Hills residents, mainly from other sections of Pennsylvania and neighboring states, fought the Battle of the Mud. The summer brought clouds of dust, the fall and spring meant skin-deep wading in that mud. Roads were unpaved, there were no street lights and no nearby stores.

Dozens of milk companies and bakeries showered them with free milk and bread as "samples". But soon the daily visit of milk men and bakery men gave way to hourly calls from salesmen soliciting for a dozen kinds of goods and services, from diaper services to storm and screen doors, from book clubs to television sets.

Seventeen years have passed since those early "pioneer" days. This new living room for industry is justly proud of its many fine schools and churches. Six modern and fully-equipped school buildings have been constructed since 1953. There are three elementary schools and the upper grades are accommodated in a handsome three-building complex including the new Pennsbury High School, opened in September, 1965. St. Francis Cabini is an excellent, modern parochial elementary school; and there is also a parochial high school for boys. Bucks County Technical School offers a wide range of vocational courses for high school students and evening classes for adults.

This editorial by Harry E. Kinzie, first editor of Fairless Hills News, won national recognition in Readers Digest, August, 1952.

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GRAEBER'S LUMBER COMPANY

The 39th home and the engineering of Bedford Road, June 26, 1951.

The very old and the very new — near Oxford Valley Road.

Many of the churches are new and extend a warm welcome to the families in the community. They are designed to meet the needs of growing congregations and sponsor a host of organizations and activities for adults and youngsters. Recreational facilities include an Olympic size swimming pool, a beautifully landscaped nine-hole community golf course and the 40-lane Fairlanes Bowling Alley. In warm summer days Lake Caroline is a young fisherman's delight and in the winter it becomes an outdoor ice-skating rink.

A stable community life has evolved, sometimes painfully, but steadily; these men and women came to Fairless Hills from various "home towns". They came to work and to stay; to make Falls Township their home. They have borne with new problems, physical as well as psychological. They now share with its indigenous men and women the making of a modern "land at the falls", geared to the highly technical demands that plunged it suddenly, in mid-century, into the industrial mainstream of American life.

Fairlanes Bowling — 40 lanes — the center of many important tournaments and the home of the largest junior bowling program in the world.

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If Lee had won at Gettysburg, local farmers planned to hide their horses in dense woods in background.

YMCA — Oxford Valley Road

Community Golf Course

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